Meet UD’s new provost at the March 4 UDARF luncheon

The University of Delaware’s new provost, Domenico Grasso, will be the guest speaker at the next meeting of the University of Delaware Association of Retired Faculty. The meeting is scheduled from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 4, at Clayton Hall.

Grasso became UD provost on Aug. 15, 2013, after serving as vice president for research and dean of the Graduate College of the University of Vermont. In announcing his appointment, President Patrick Harker said, “Dr. Grasso’s career has been marked by thoughtful and creative initiatives, reflecting a global viewpoint that impacts all academic disciplines.”

Make your reservations for the March 4 luncheon with the enclosed form or go to the UDARF website at www.udel.edu/UDARF and click on “Reservation for the next luncheon meeting.”

Dear UDARF Members,

I hope that everyone had a wonderful holiday. We got two Cavalier King Charles Spaniel puppies for Christmas this year. Our two boys, Reagan and Monroe, have been with us since Jan. 9, 2014. They have added their own special kind of excitement to our home. Lucky for us, the puppies LOVE the snow and are happy to dash around chasing each other and tumbling in the white softness. I guess that it takes something like seeing puppies at play or grandchildren making snowmen to remind me how wonderful a white winter can be!

Has anyone noticed puppies in green vests on the University of Delaware campus? PROUD (Puppy Raisers of the University of Delaware) is a registered student organization that raises puppies for the Seeing Eye Foundation in Morristown, N.J. Student volunteers receive puppies when they are 7-8 weeks old and keep them until they are 14 to 19 months old. They give the puppies a loving environment and expose them to a variety of social situations. While the students provide basic obedience training, the dogs must later be returned to the Seeing Eye Foundation to receive formal training to work as service dogs for the visually impaired.

There are over 400 registered student organizations at the University of Delaware. Two other student groups working with dogs are Canine Companions for Independence (CCI) and People Using Puppies for Service (PUPS).

Is the University of Delaware campus going to the dogs?

As Charles Schultz said: Happiness is a warm puppy.

Best wishes,

Stuart Sharkey, President
Doug Tallamy believes that if nature, as we know it, is going to be saved, humans will have to do a much better job of managing the ecosystems that support the biodiversity of life on our planet.

Tallamy, professor of entomology and wildlife ecology, discussed the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem protection during the Dec. 3 luncheon meeting of the UD Association of Retired Faculty in Clayton Hall.

The author of Bringing Nature Home: How Native Plants Sustain Wildlife in Our Gardens, Tallamy began his presentation on “Network for Life: Your Role in Stitching Together the Natural World” by recalling President Theodore Roosevelt’s 1908 dictum of “leave it as it is” to those who advocated mining the Grand Canyon.

“It is no longer an option to leave most of our country as it once was,” Tallamy said. “Only 5 percent of the lower 48 states are even close to being in a pristine ecological state.”

The remaining areas, Tallamy said, have been logged, tilled, paved, drained, grazed or otherwise developed, with rivers either straightened, dammed and, in some cases, not even reaching the sea.

This state of environmental degradation can be traced to a failure to abandon the adversarial relationship with the natural world that enabled hunter-gatherer societies to survive, Tallamy said.

“Remember, it was nature that ate us, froze us, drowned us, starved us and destroyed our crops, and the more we beat back nature, tamed it or eliminated it, the better off we were,” Tallamy said. “Our war against nature worked in the past without causing ecosystem collapse because there were so few of us. Understanding this is the key to fixing the problems we have created.”

Fragmented into small, isolated pockets, the natural world has been carved into tiny remnants of its former state, with each area too small to sustain the species that run its ecosystems, Tallamy said.

Tallamy cited a study of the number of Eastern box turtles living on a 35-acre woodlot just east of the athletic facilities on UD’s south campus that has been isolated for the past century.

“When the study began in 1968, researchers found 91 turtles. There were 22 in 2002 and in 2010 there were just 12 turtles found in that woodlot,” Tallamy said. “When you take large populations of species and shrink them down to tiny populations, they are highly vulnerable to local extinction.”

Ecosystems function locally, Tallamy said, and recent research suggests that every species counts.

“We need them all, because biodiversity runs our ecosystems,” Tallamy said. “Biodiversity is essential to ecosystems because it increases stability, improves biogeochemical processes, increases productivity and decreases susceptibility to biotic invasions.”

A viable alternative to fragmentation and local species extinction is the creation and expansion of corridors linking these isolated habitats, Tallamy said.

Convenient opportunities for building such corridors include mountain ridges, riparian corridors, cross-country power lines, roads and rangelands.

For such corridors to become viable connections they need to become functional habitats populated with native plants that support biodiversity and sustain ecosystems, Tallamy said.

With more than 3,300 nonnative plants introduced in the United States, selecting native species that support animal life is key to restoring the balance of nature, Tallamy said.

“Most insects, especially the ones birds eat, develop and reproduce only on the plants with which they share an evolutionary history,” Tallamy said. “We must use the knowledge that most insects are specialists to build corridors that support effective food webs.”

Tallamy said that the world is entering a new era, the ecocene, where ecological sustainability will not be just a tired cliché but a globally embraced mandate.

“Our age-old need to destroy the life around us in order to survive will be replaced by the ethical and ecological imperative to sustain it, because we have no other choice,” Tallamy said. “I for one cannot wait for the ecocene, and you won’t either. If we practice conservation in our public spaces, our work places and in our yards, we will enrich our lives.”

“You want to reward companies that are honest with you,” Jenkins said. “If something doesn’t have a label that identifies what’s in it, don’t buy it.”
**‘My Intellectual Journey’**

Ray Callahan discusses his career as historian

A head-on collision with the British Official Secrets Act of 1911 changed the focus of Raymond Callahan’s doctoral dissertation, but also led to a long and distinguished career as a teacher, researcher and author.

Professor emeritus of history at UD, Callahan recounted his personal and professional journey during a “My Intellectual Journey” lecture, sponsored Nov. 7 by the UD Association of Retired Faculty at the Courtyard Newark-University of Delaware.

“The question of how we decide what profession or trade or life’s work we will embrace and which career we will choose, is really a very interesting one,” Callahan said. “The answers to that question are as numerous as the number of individuals to whom it could be posed.”

There are any number of things that can lead up to the moment when something clicks in the mind and the person says, “This is what I want to do when I grow up,” Callahan said.

Familiar factors, Callahan noted, often include some combination of family influence, inspiring teacher or adviser, a book that captured our imagination or a trip that we took with our parents that made us more curious about the world.

“For me, the reasons are multiple, and two are on the list I just mentioned,” Callahan said. “The other thing, because it is very important to me, is serendipity, or, as historians like to call it, contingency, which sounds more serious than serendipity, or even more simply, chance.”

The first serendipity, Callahan noted, was a prolonged childhood illness during which his mother, who had earned her degree during the 1930s as a nurse, would often read to him from the historical novels that she loved.

“They were Westerns in general,” Callahan said. “Listening to these stories, I became engaged with this dramatic, colorful and entirely mythical segment of the past, and images of those landscapes began to fill my mind.”

Also important, Callahan said, was the existence of a local lending library, where his interest in the history of the American West eventually led to obtaining a long neglected copy of *On the Border with Crook*, written by John Bourke, a former U.S. Army Cavalry officer who had served with Gen. George Crook during the Army’s campaign against the Western Apaches in what was then called the Arizona Territory.

Callahan recalled how his reading interests widened to include tales of naval warfare by British novelist C.S. Forester, and *Bugles and the Tiger*, by John Masters, an officer in the British Army who served in India and retired after Indian independence in 1947.

“Masters was a successful writer of a great many historical novels, including *Bhowani Junction*, set in the last year of British rule in India,” Callahan said. “It is still an interesting book to read, not because it is great literature, but because it is a very interesting and largely autobiographical account of what it was like to be a British officer in India as the whole structure of British rule became unglued.”

Mesmerized by the book, Callahan found that he wanted to know how the British came to rule that huge country.

“They put together a massive institution known as the Indian Army,” Callahan said. “I wondered what happened to it in the war (World War II) that began in the last paragraph of the book. That was a half century ago, and I have been answering those questions ever since.”

While planning his doctoral thesis in the spring of 1964, Callahan’s proposed path of research led him straight into a formidable roadblock known as the British Official Secrets Act of 1911.

The law, which basically closed information for a minimum of 50 years, was amended as late at 1947.

“There was a lot of correspondence back and forth between myself and the custodians of the British secrets in London,” Callahan said. “The technically polite but very clear message was that although it was a very interesting topic, neither myself or anyone else would be able to see those records before the earliest years of the 21st century.”

With the Official Secrets Act blocking access to the materials he needed to tell the end of the story of British rule in India, Callahan decided to got back to the 18th century to learn how it all got started.

“Out of all of this came a fascinating tale of how the East India Company attracted an army of impoverished Indians and built the force that would conquer India and then go on to establish British power across the globe,” Callahan said. “The Indian Army was led by men whose social standing would never have allowed them to hold an officer’s commission in the regular British Army.”

Callahan noted that about 90 percent of the men who joined the Indian Army as young officers died within their first five years of service. Their remains now rest in weed-choked cemeteries, many of which are attached to neglected Anglican churches in India.

“Those company officers got me my Ph.D.,” Callahan said. “But for the British Official Secrets Act of 1911, I might never have been able to find them and receive my doctorate and accept a job that was offered to me at the University of Delaware.”

*Article by Jerry Rhodes
Photo by Kathy F. Atkinson*
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QuARTERLY NEWSLETTER

In Memoriam

Andrew B. Kirkpatrick Jr., former chairman of the Board of Trustees, died Jan. 18, 2014. He joined the board in 1982 and served as its chairman from 1988-99.

Dorothy Moser, a long-time member of the nursing faculty, died on April 19, 2013. Prof. Moser was instrumental in founding and organizing Delaware Hospice. She was active in the leadership of UDARF, serving as its president.

Albert Matlack, an adjunct faculty member in the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry, died Nov. 4, 2013. He joined UD in 1995 after a long career at Hercules Research Center.

Wallace H. McCurdy Jr., associate professor emeritus of chemistry and biochemistry, died Nov. 20, 2013. He was at UD for more than 50 years.

John McLaughlin, former associate professor of psychology, died on Oct. 20, 2013. He retired from UD in 2004 after 40 years on the faculty.

Jerome Siegel, professor emeritus of neuroscience, died Feb. 1, 2014. He was 84. He joined the UD faculty in 1962 and served as director of UD’s Institute for Neuroscience and Behavior from 1983-84 and the graduate program in neuroscience from 1983-89.


Ronald Wenger, associate professor emeritus of mathematical sciences, died Jan. 1, 2014. He joined the UD faculty in 1965, served as associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences from 1971-94 and created the Mathematical Sciences Teaching and Learning Center. Dr. Wenger retired in 2005.

In Brief


Jeffrey B. Miller, professor emeritus of economics, gave a talk at the Digital CPA CPA2BIZ Cloud User Conference sponsored by the American Institute of CPAs on Nov. 22. The title of the talk was “Expanding Your Digital Value Via Eldercare and Social Security Advisory Services.”

Clella Murray, formerly with the College of Education, received a first place award for her book Dangerous Journey from the National Federation of Press Women for young adults.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

My Intellectual Journey

4 p.m., Thursday, April 10 • Courtyard Newark
Joan DelFattore, professor of English and legal studies

Wine and cheese reception follows.

There is no charge, and reservations are not required.
Luncheon Meeting
Tuesday, March 4, 2014
11:30 A.M., Clayton Hall

Your Name: _______________________________________  $17.00

Guest: _______________________________________  $17.00

Total Amount Enclosed $ _____________

Reservations are due one week in advance of the luncheon.

Reservations can be made in either of two ways: by mail or electronically.
By mail: Send check payable to the University of Delaware with this form
Electronically: Go to www.udel.edu/UDARF, click on Reservation for Next Luncheon meeting
All reservations due by Feb. 25, 2014

E-mail address (only if new): _______________________________________________________

Please use remaining space for news and address change.

Enjoy Courtyard Newark at the University of Delaware hospitality

Bill Sullivan, managing director of the Courtyard Newark on the Laird Campus, has generously renewed a special rate for UDARF members, their families and friends.

The special rate is half off of the prevailing room rate for the dates of travel, based on room availability. Reservations must be made personally with Bill at 302-218-4541 or billsull@udel.edu. Do not ask at the hotel main desk.